

MCKEITHEN WON'T BACK HUMPHREY

By BILL LYNCH
(States-Item Bureau)

BATON ROUGE—Gov. John J. McKeithen said today he will not support Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey's bid for the presidency in November.

"I shall not support the nominees of the Democratic national party," McKeithen said at a press conference this morning.

"At this time," he added, "I have no plans for participating in the national election."

The governor's decision to sit out the 1968 presidential campaign, after supporting Humphrey for the nomination at the Chicago convention, may throw Louisiana's 10 electoral votes to George Wallace.

Former Alabama Gov. Wallace is running as a third-party candidate on the American Independent Party ticket.

MCKEITHEN WENT TO THE Chicago convention hoping that he might become the Democratic candidate for vice president if the party decided to select a Southerner for the post.

Since then, there had been strong indications that McKeithen would not support the Democratic national

party nominees, which include Sen. Edmund Muskie of Maine as Humphrey's running mate.

The Louisiana governor deserted the convention a day earlier, skipping the vice president's acceptance speech.

McKeithen said that he informed Humphrey in Chicago prior to the nomination being awarded that he could not support him.

THE GOVERNOR CITED AS one of the reasons Humphrey's statement praising Chief Justice Earl Warren of the Supreme Court. McKeithen said he considered it one of the worst appointments.

In a prepared statement, McKeithen said:

"**THREE OR FOUR** months ago I endorsed Vice President Humphrey's bid to win the Democratic party's nomination for president of the United States.

"I did this because of my personal friendship and respect for the vice president, because of our mutual backgrounds as alumni of Louisiana States University and also because I knew him to be a safe and moderate alternative to radical leftists, anarchists and even Communist elements who were seeking to gain control of the party.

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"Events at the Democratic Convention last week in Chicago more than justified my fears and it did clearly emerge that Vice President Humphrey and only he, among all candidates for the nomination, presented a clear alternative to those elements who could eventually mean the death of our democracy, if, God forbid, they should ever get into a position of power.

"As you may recall, I had pledged to support the vice president through the convention and this I have done.

"**DESPITE THE HIGH** personal regard with which I hold him, I cannot in good conscience support his bid for the presidency. Philosophically, the vice president and I still remain acres apart and I might add that I personally advised him of my position prior to his nomination.

"I could go into many of these philosophic differences here but for the sake of time I shall give only one.

"At the convention, before a live, televised caucus of the California delegation, the vice president stated that he believed that former President Eisenhower's greatest contribution to this nation was naming Earl Warren chief justice of the United States Supreme Court.

"I consider this appointment by Mr. Eisenhower to be one of the worst made by any president in our nation's history as I believe that the Supreme Court, under Mr. Warren, has done more to weaken the Constitution of the U.S. and dilute the true meaning of democracy, specifically with reference to law and or-

der, than any other single factor in this land."

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"At this time I have no plans of participating in the national election."

THE GOVERNOR ALSO read a letter he had written to Chicago Mayor Richard Daley, praising him for the method of handling demonstrators during the convention.

McKeithen called many of the demonstrators "trash" and said they went looking for trouble and got it.

There has been widespread criticism that Chicago police went too far in beating demonstrators, also injuring a number of newsmen and bystanders.

McKeithen noted again that the Louisiana delegation authorized a resolution praising Daley.

The governor had gone to Chicago as head of the 36-vote delegation which cast all but one of its votes for Humphrey on the first ballot after McKeithen withdrew as a favorite son.

The Governor's hopes of getting on the ticket as a running mate with Humphrey were weakened after McKeithen had a run-in with Louisiana labor leader Victor Bussie.

The governor said the presidential race might wind up in the House of Representatives. He added he did not think Wallace could win.

Conceivably, he said, he could support either Wallace or Richard Nixon, the GOP nominee, but has decided to stay out of the race.